



Judicial Conduct Commission Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2013-2014

Judicial Conduct Commission
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Commission Members

Stephen D. Wolnitzek, Chair
Covington

Judge Janet L. Stumbo
Prestonsburg

Judge Eddy Coleman
Pikeville

Judge David P. Bowles
Louisville

Diane E. Logsdon
Elizabethtown

Joyce King Jennings
Louisville

Alternate Members

J. David Boswell
Paducah

Judge Laurance B. VanMeter
Lexington

Judge Jeffrey M. Walson
Winchester

Judge Susan M. Johnson
Paintsville

Commission Staff

Ms. Jimmy Shaffer
Executive Secretary

J. Rachel Noyes
Executive Assistant

Judicial Conduct Complaints:

In the 2013-2014 fiscal year, the Commission considered 209 complaints—193 new complaints and 28 complaints carried over from the 2012-2013 fiscal year. The Commission concluded 192 complaints, five of which resulted in imposed sanctions:

- Two Private Admonitions
 1. Violation of Canon 4C(3)(b)(i) and (iv) for using the prestige of the judicial office for the solicitation of donations for a charitable organization.
 2. Violation of Canon 3B(5) for making a statement during a court proceeding which could be perceived as gender bias.
- Two Public Reprimands ([Judge Martin McDonald](#) and [Judge Frank A. Fletcher](#))
- One 30-day Suspension ([Judge Rebecca S. Ward](#))

Twenty-nine complaints were pending at the end of the fiscal year, eighteen of which were received prior to the end of the fiscal year but too late to be considered before the first meeting in the new fiscal year and eleven of which were carried after initial consideration.

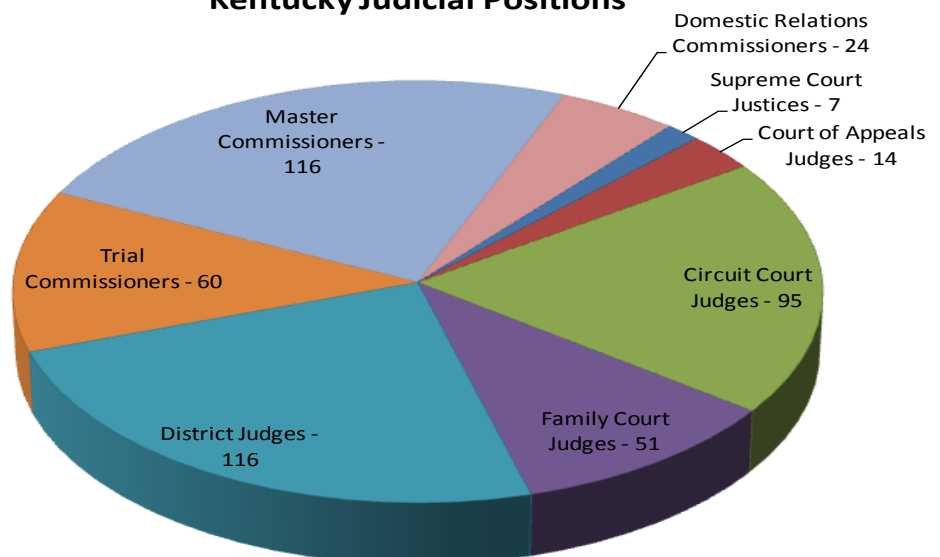
Jurisdiction:

There are 367 judicial positions in the Commonwealth of Kentucky within the jurisdiction of the Commission. Additionally, the Commission has jurisdiction over attorneys who have filed as candidates for judicial office. Of 193 total complaints filed for fiscal year 2013-2014, 81 complaints were filed against circuit court judges of general jurisdiction, 51 were filed against circuit family court judges, 50 were filed against district court judges, and 17 were filed against judicial candidates.

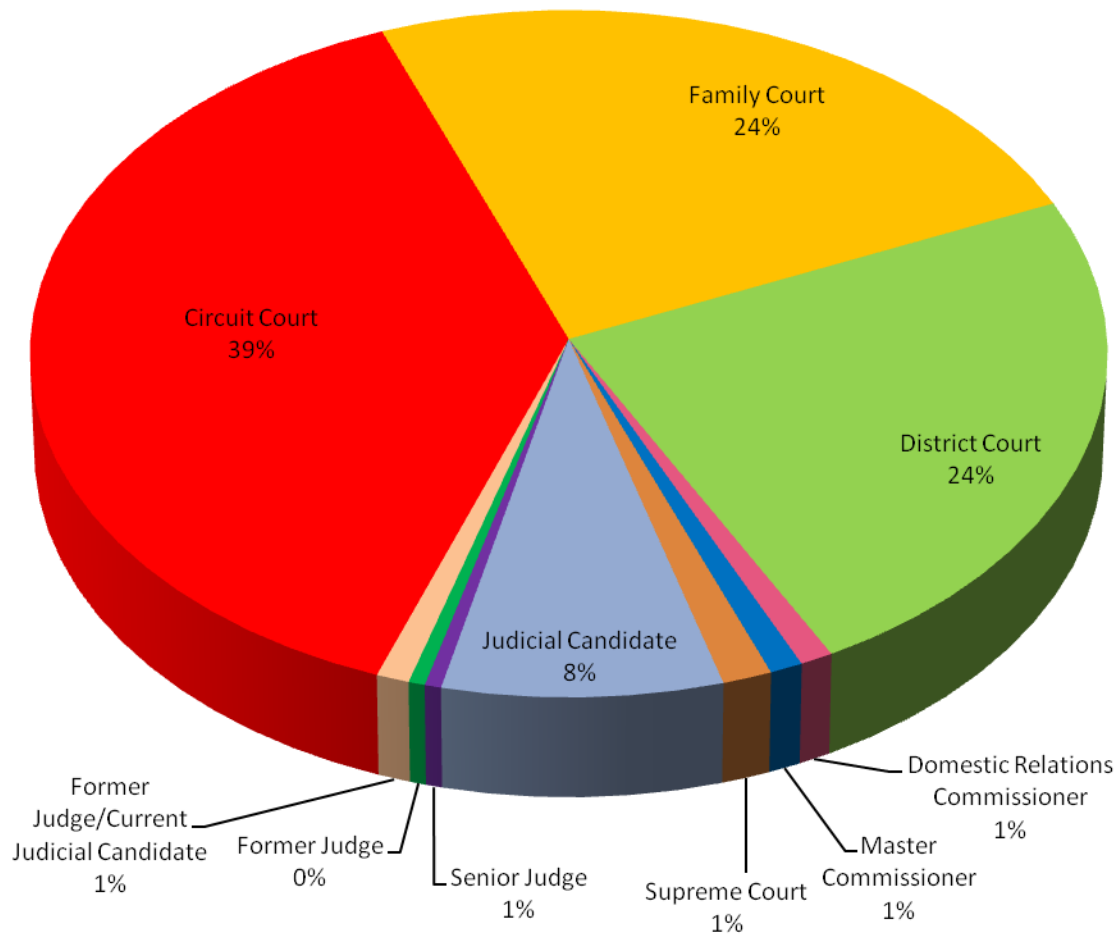
Complaints:

- **28** - Number of complaints pending at the beginning of the fiscal year
- **193** - Number of complaints received during the fiscal year
- **192** - Number of complaints disposed of during the fiscal year
- **29** - Number of complaints pending at the end of the fiscal year

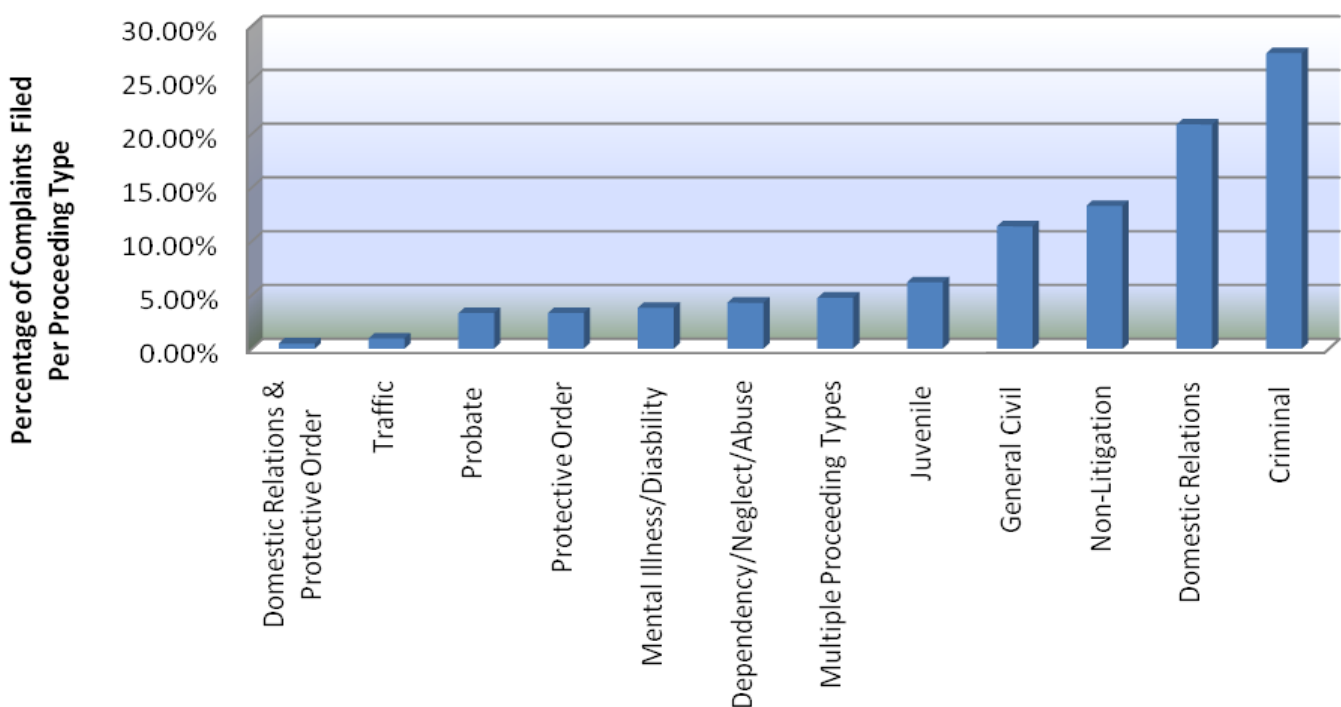
Kentucky Judicial Positions



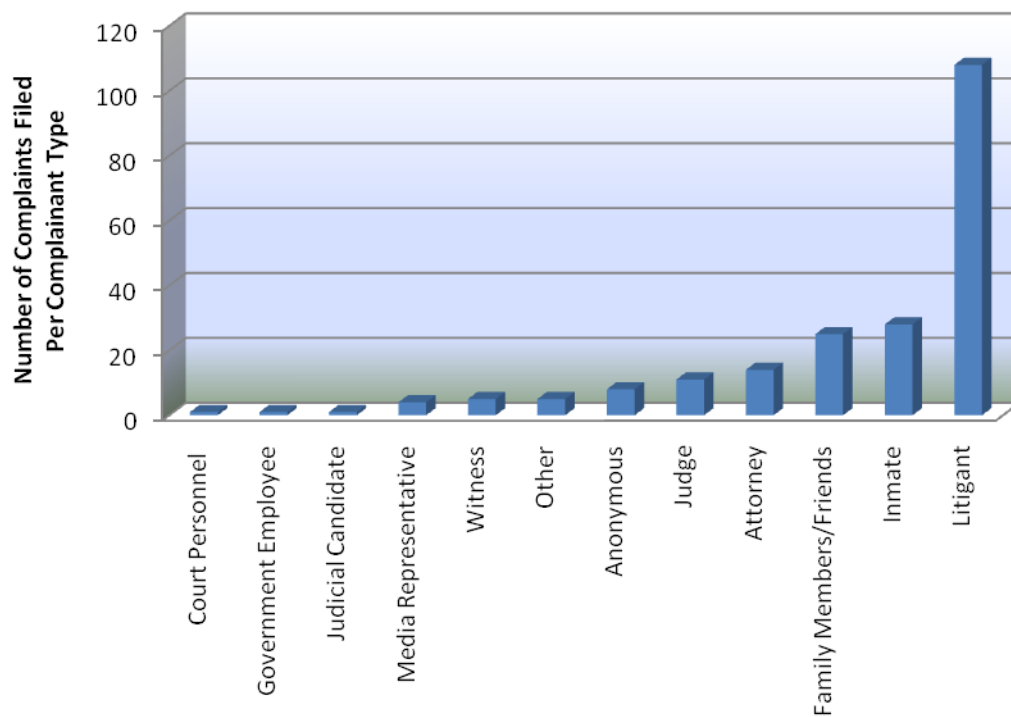
Percentages of Complaints by Judicial Position:



What Types of Proceedings Resulted in Complaints?



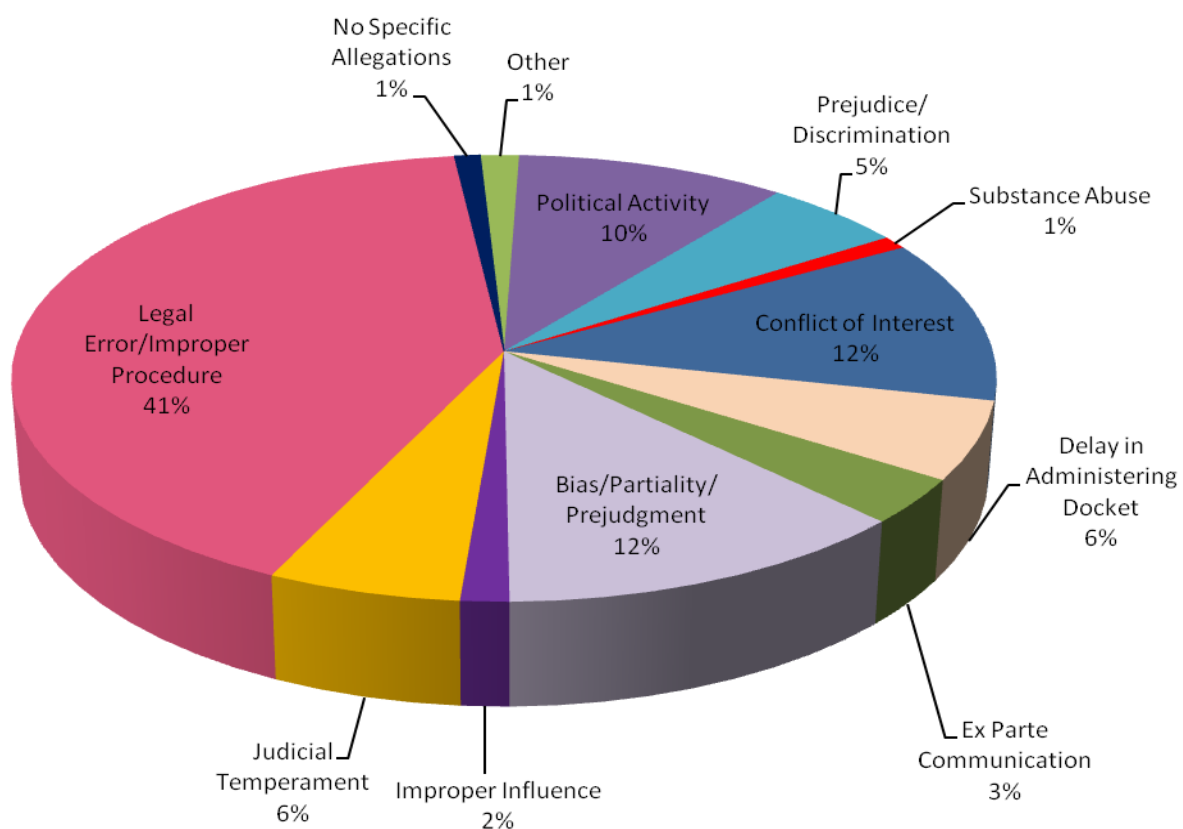
Who Filed Complaints?



Complainant Representation in Court:

- 50.24% were represented by counsel
- 1.90% were represented by counsel, then appeared *pro se*
- 24.17% appeared *pro se*
- 7.58% unknown
- 16.11% not applicable (non-litigation)

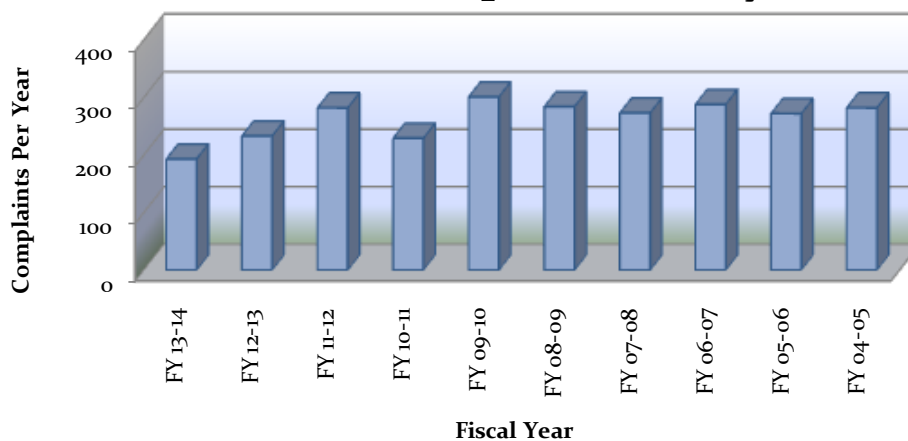
What were the Allegations?



2013-2014 Presentations:

- **University of Louisville Brandeis Inns of Court** - Presentation on judicial elections, given by Mr. Stephen Wolnitzek, on October 29, 2013.
- **District Bar** - Presentation on general Commission procedures and statistics given by Judge Janet Stumbo, in Ashland, on September 16, 2013, and in Prestonsburg, on November 21, 2013.
- **Circuit Judges College** - "When Trouble Comes: How to Avoid It and How to Respond to It" presented by Judge Eddy Coleman, Justice Michele Keller, Mr. Stephen Wolnitzek, and Ms. Jimmy Shaffer, on November 20, 2013.
- **Louisville Bar Association** - "Recusing and Reporting Judges: The Legal, Ethical & Practical" presented by Judge David Bowles, with co-presenter J. Vincent Aprile II, on March 5, 2014.

10-Year Complaint History



About the Judicial Conduct Commission

The mission of the Kentucky Judicial Conduct Commission is to protect the public, to encourage judges, commissioners and candidates for judicial office to maintain high standards of conduct, and to promote public confidence in the integrity, independence, competence, and impartiality of the judiciary.

The Commission accomplishes this mission through its investigation of complaints of judicial misconduct, wrongdoing or disability. In cases where judges, commissioners and candidates for judicial office are found to have engaged in misconduct or to be incapacitated, the Kentucky Constitution authorizes the Commission to take appropriate disciplinary action, including issuing admonitions, reprimands, censures, suspensions, or removal from office.

<http://courts.ky.gov/commissionscommittees/JCC>